

Developer drops Henderson Point offer

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

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A halting regulatory process and the declining economy have combined to force the proposed developer of Henderson Point — the former Gulfshore Assembly on Highway 90 west of Pass Christian — to drop an offer to purchase the property.

"We no longer have a contract of sale on the Henderson Point property," said Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) which owns the 34 beachfront acres on St. Louis Bay in Harrison County.

Gulfshore Assembly at Henderson Point was wiped out by a direct hit from Hurricane Katrina in 2005. A specially-appointed committee of Mississippi Baptists subsequently recommended that the assembly not be rebuilt and that the property be sold.

Newtrac East LLC, the development company, made an \$18 million offer for the property in early 2008, but recently notified Futral of their intentions to withdraw after the Harrison County Planning Commission twice delayed a vote on regulations that would have allowed the development to proceed.

"When the (Planning Commission) finalizes its Smart Code regulations and if the buyer's finances fall back into place, he may still be the purchaser and developer of Henderson Point," Futral said in a letter to MBCB members. "We are not discounting the point that he wants to purchase the property, and if presented with a check tomorrow, I would be inclined to accept it."

Futral said MCBP personnel will remain in close contact with the Harrison County Planning Commission as they proceed with their evaluation of the Smart Code regulations.

"I honestly believe they are working toward the adoption of zoning regulations that will enhance the Mississippi Gulf Coast and potentially make Henderson Point even more attractive to prospective buyers. We... will keep the lines of communication open with local officials," he said.

"I was disappointed that the sale of the Henderson Point property did not go through because I know how many hours have been spent by various groups in prayer, planning, and negotiations leading up to this point," said Mickey Dalrymple, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and pastor of Fairview Church, Columbus. "However,

Evangelism Conference offers praise



Mike Harland (on stage), director of worship for LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, leads attendees at the 2009 Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference in the worship center of First Church, Clinton, on the evening of January 18. Harland is a former minister of music at Broadmoor Church, Madison, and Crossgates Church, Brandon. Complete coverage of the conference will be available in the January 29 issue of The Baptist Record. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

I am also excited to see what God has in store for the future regarding the sale of this property.

"This is His land, and it will all turn out for His glory. Our task is to remain faithful as Mississippi Baptists in seeking His will."

Randy Von Kanel, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) and pastor of First Church, Tupelo, echoed Dalrymple's comments.

"The news regarding the termination of the purchase agreement for the sale of the Henderson Point property came as a disappointment, but not a discouragement," Von Kanel said. "In some ways, we were not surprised, given the delays with the (Planning Commission) and with the state of the economy."

"God has His hand on Mississippi Baptists, and we will simply trust Him for His perfect plan for the Gulfshore property. Those of us in leadership sincerely believe that our Father has something better in store."

"We are disappointed the sale of Henderson Point has fallen through, but as believers we are aware that our

Heavenly Father knows where we are and His best is taking place with Mississippi Baptists," said Hal Bates, chairman of the MCBF Executive Committee and pastor of First Church, Collinsville.

"There have been too many Baptists praying about this matter for God not to be in this process. Whether we sell the property later, or God opens another door for ministry, His will is our greatest desire. It is always exciting when God directs His people."

Before Henderson Point served as Mississippi Baptists' beachfront assembly, the property was the site of a popular local resort at the turn of the 20th century and then was the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in the World War II era.

The convention board purchased the property in the 1950s at a federal government auction, renamed it Gulfshore Assembly, and utilized the existing Academy structures until Hurricane Camille leveled it in 1969. It was rebuilt in the early 1970s and suffered damage in several hurricanes before it was again destroyed, this time by Hurricane Katrina.



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Christian persecution: daily, deadly

Most editors share the same frustration: too much news and too little space. There just isn't enough real estate in a given issue to print all the news that we want our readers to have. Space limitations are especially severe in a weekly, small-format newspaper like The Baptist Record.

Unfortunately, one of the subjects that often gets pushed to the bottom of the news queue is information on the plight of persecuted Christians worldwide — and persecution is occurring daily on a worldwide basis. While news space may be tight, we must not forget the plight of our brothers and sisters who are mistreated merely because of their faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) has proven to be a reliable source for information on persecuted Christians. The Voice of the Martyrs was founded in 1967 by the late Richard Wurmbrand, a Romanian Lutheran pastor who served two prison terms in Soviet-dominated Romania for the crime of preaching Christianity. He was

eventually freed after a ransom was arranged, and he immigrated to the West to found The Voice of the Martyrs.

Wurmbrand's organization has been unrelenting at the thankless task of investigating and reporting the persecution of Christians around the world. The Voice of the Martyrs web site is www.persecution.com. Among the current entries on the web site:

- On Nov. 12, two Christian sisters were killed and their mother wounded by a gang of Islamic extremists in the Al Qahira section of Mosul, Iraq, according to VOM contacts.

The gunmen shot one of the sisters as she was waiting for a bus outside their home. They then stormed into the home, killed the other sister, and injured their mother. A bomb placed by the assailants at the entrance of the house detonated as police arrived on the scene, injuring several officers.

- Since late November, about 100 Christian men, women, and children have been arrested by Eritrean authorities, VOM Canada reported. The wave of house arrests began in northern Eritrean cities and moved to southern regions before reaching the capital, Asmara, on Dec. 12. Some of the detained Christians were reportedly transferred to a military facility and were severely mistreated. Local sources indicate that an unspecified number may have died due to untreated injuries sustained in detention.

The Eritrean government persecutes Christians, often placing believers in metal containers that are extremely hot during the day and cold during the night. Nearly 1,800 Eritrean Christians are believed to be under arrest because of their religious beliefs. They are being held in police stations, military camps and prisons in 12 known locations across Eritrea. It is believed more than 28 clergymen are being held.

- Twenty-year-old Sandul Bibi and her father Gulsher are in prison in Pakistan, charged with violating section 295-B of the Pakistani legal code, the "blasphemy" law. Sandul is falsely accused of ripping pages from the Quran. On Oct. 9 a large crowd of Muslims attacked Christian families at a church, throwing stones and firing guns. They were shouting, "Kill Gulsher and his daughter Sandul." Sandul and her

father, Gulsher Masih, were arrested after a mob from the local mosque surrounded their house.

Loudspeakers from different mosques broadcast accusations that Christians had disgraced the Quran, calling Muslims to attack and burn their homes. The angry crowd threw stones and set fire to Sandul's home. Christians believe Sandul and her father were targeted and arrested because they were aggressively winning villagers to Christ.

- On Jan. 5, police arrested four Christians on false charges of forcible conversion in the village of Kushalpura, Madhya Pradesh, India. At 10:00 a.m., Pastor Kantilal Bhuria went to a home where 25 Christians were gathered for prayer. During the service, a mob of Hindu extremists barged into the house and accused Pastor Bhuria of forcibly converting Hindus.

The extremists verbally abused those present and beat a Christian woman. The police arrived on scene after receiving a phone call from the attackers and arrested four believers. At last report, these Christians remained in detention.

For every report of Christian persecution that makes it to the West through organizations such as The Voice of the Martyrs, there are undoubtedly thousands of other reports we never hear — and from all available evidence, persecution is increasing almost everywhere it exists.

There are limits to what we can do for these Christian brothers and sisters, but we can pray for them and search for creative ways to support them as they go through their great trials of faith.

And the next time you hear someone complaining that the padded pews in the worship center aren't all that comfortable...

Iam writing this article to reach out in love to those who are hurting, confused, angry, or just plain passive where the issue of same-sex attraction is concerned.

When homosexuality hit my home, I was devastated. My emotions were in turmoil, and I felt rage and confusion. I knew God was "the answer" but could not wrap my mind around how to engage God in what I thought needed to be done. I searched and searched for help but could find none.

Five years passed, and then I discovered a Love Won Out Conference. There I gained understanding and found hope. I discovered a program of support for family or friends of those dealing with same-sex attraction. I heard testimonies from individuals who had received the ability to control their same-sex feelings or had been totally healed. I also heard testimonies from parents who had gained understanding and were able to minister compassion without compromising God's word.

I embraced that program, thinking I would get help for my family member. My husband and I began attending a support group, thinking we

GUEST OPINION:



When same-sex issues hit home

By Judy Williams
Clinton

would get our loved one healed. The Scripture about removing the log from one's own eye before removing the speck from another's quickly became real to us. That will soon be nine years ago.

My life has been transformed. I have found the peace about which the Bible talks that passes all understanding. Deep healing within me has occurred, and it allows me the ability to communicate more honestly and effectively with my family and others. During these eight years of ministry, God has continued to heal my woundedness and show me how to receive His love.

I now hear story after story of children who want and need parental love, yet feel rejection. They say they do not

want these same-sex feelings, that they pray and pray and ask God to remove the desire and it doesn't happen. We hear parents' stories much like my own, who cry out to God in anguish not understanding how "this" could happen in their family. They relate that they have been good parents, gone to church, taught their children the ways of the Lord.

We also have pastors and church workers come with pretty much the same story, desiring to understand what is going on in their lives and how to deal with these unwanted same-sex feelings.

A Restoration Grace Conference on Homosexuality will be held February 6-7 at Morrison Heights Church in Clinton, sponsored by In His

Time Ministry, Morrison Heights Church, and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. We invite you to attend. Visit www.morrisonheights.org/restorationgrace for more information, or call Johnnie Armstrong at (601) 925-6427.

As people come to In His Time Ministry we know that the Lord's unfailing love is calling them. No other issue would have driven me to Jesus more fully than this. It is something beyond my ability to change, but the Holy Spirit within us has the ability. The God of the universe desires a love relationship with each individual that is so passionate that they too will receive peace that passes all understanding.

It is an awesome journey and one that God desires every member of the Bride of Christ to experience. As God purifies His Bride, He wants His Body to reach out with uncompromising grace and compassion to those who are hurting.

Williams is co-director of In His Time Ministry of Clinton, an Exodus-affiliated ministry. To leave a confidential message, call (601) 925-6435. For more information on Exodus International, visit www.exodus-international.org.

ERLC lists hot-button issues to watch in '09

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — The defense of pro-life policies is the most urgent of the "substantial challenges" facing Southern Baptists and other social conservatives in the new Congress, say leaders of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville.

Writing on the entity's website, ERLC President Richard Land and Vice President Barrett Duke said they expect much of their focus this year to be on preventing the overthrow of laws protecting unborn life, marriage, and free speech, as well as other policies supported by Southern Baptists.

The largely defensive posture is a result of the incoming administration of President-elect Barack Obama, a liberal Democrat, and an increase in the number of liberals in Congress, they said.

"Our greatest concern is the likelihood that many pro-life advances under President Bush's administration will be rolled back," Land and Duke wrote.

"President-elect Obama's pledge to sign the Freedom of Choice Act would do that very thing. This pernicious bill would invalidate all limits on abortion."

The Freedom of Choice Act mandates that a government (local, state, or federal) may

not deny or interfere with "a woman's right to choose to bear a child; to terminate a pregnancy prior to viability; or to terminate a pregnancy after viability where termination is necessary to protect the life or health of the woman."

The measure "will have to be stopped before it gets to the president's desk," said Land and Duke, who is the ERLC's vice president for public policy and research.

The ERLC and other pro-life organizations, they said, will also need to resist efforts to overturn such bans as those on federal funds for destructive embryonic stem cell research, Medicaid-backed abortions, and organizations that perform or promote abortions in foreign countries.

Land and Duke reiterated their support for a pro-life measure, the Pregnant Women Support Act, which would seek to reduce abortions by numerous initiatives, including requiring informed consent for all women considering abortion and establishing grants for colleges to provide services to pregnant and parenting students.

Other legislative efforts Land and Duke said they expect the ERLC to combat in 2009 include:

- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would elevate "sexual orienta-

tion" — a category that includes homosexuality, bisexuality, and transgendered status — in the workplace to the level of protected classes such as race and religion.

- Hate crimes legislation that would expand protections to cover "sexual orientation" and threaten the free-speech rights of those who contend homosexual behavior is sinful.

- An attack on the Defense of Marriage Act, the 1996 law that gives states the option of not recognizing another state's same-sex marriages.

- The Fairness Doctrine, which is seen as targeting the proliferation of conservative and Christian radio talk shows.

- Card-check legislation that would eliminate employees' rights to a secret ballot in votes on the unionization of the workplace.

- Policies to limit carbon dioxide emissions in an effort to combat global warming.

Land and Duke said they are "not convinced, and neither are most Southern Baptists, that human activities are the primary cause of the current changes in the climate that have been documented around the world."

They expressed concern about how some legislation intended to impact global warming would affect the poor. "Whatever one's current view

on human-induced global warming," they said, "loving your neighbor as yourself requires one to always ask the following question of any legislation: 'How will this law impact those of our fellow human beings who are least able to bear further economic burden?'"

The ERLC leaders also will seek to work with Congress and the new administration to implement policies to combat human trafficking, to bring about peace in Darfur, to support American troops, and to aid the poor without increasing their dependence on the government.

"While we believe we will spend most of our energy this year resisting liberal advances, we will continue to look for ways to move responsible, God-honoring measures forward," Land and Duke wrote. "We commit to bring the teachings of Scripture and the expressed convictions of Southern Baptists to bear on every issue in order to assure that we apply the salt and light of the Christian witness to as many issues as our Lord directs, Southern Baptists have concerns and our means enable."

Editor's note: The website article about the Ethics & Religion Liberty Commission's agenda for 2009 is posted at <http://erlc.com/article/legislative-agenda-for-2009/>.

National call to prayer video available on Internet

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP) — Noting that there is no better time for individual Christians and congregations to pray for the nation, the president, and its defenders of freedom, a 90-second video is calling Baptist churches to prayer during this inaugural season.

The free video, A Call to Prayer for Our Nation, was designed to be used in worship services and can be downloaded free of charge from the

Florida Baptist Convention's website: www.flbaptist.org.

"Even beyond the week of inaugural activity, the need for constant, fervent prayer — for our nation, for our president, for one another — will go on," said David Burton, director of the Florida convention's evangelism division. "This timeless video can help pastors and church leaders throughout the year call their church members to prayer."

Burton contacted 2,800 Florida Baptist pastors through a mass e-mail, urging them to use the video to highlight the need for prayer among their members during the historic occasion of the Jan. 20 presidential inauguration of Barack Obama.

"It's hard to remember a time when there is so much happening that affects so many people — war in many parts of the world, economic turmoil, a new president of our nation facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities," Burton said, "and there's no better time for

us as individual Christians and as congregations of believers to pray. This video will touch the hearts of our people and inspire them to pray as never before."

The video features images of the nation's founding fathers, government officials, military personnel, and a cross section of the state's population.

The video, produced in cooperation with the Florida convention's evangelism and public relations divisions, can be viewed and downloaded at www.flbaptist.org. A free copy on DVD is available by calling (800) 226-8584, ext. 3157.

Orissa calm for Christmas

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Christians in the Indian state of Orissa were able to celebrate Christmas peacefully after Hindu extremists called off their plans for a statewide "bandh," a forced shutdown of the entire society, on Dec. 25. The strike was called off after government officials threatened to arrest extremist leaders who caused disturbances, according to the online edition of The Hindu newspaper. Violence over the assassination of a Hindu swami has killed an estimated 500 people and destroyed thousands of homes and church buildings. Thousands more refugees reportedly are living in the area's forests, despite near-freezing temperatures. However, secular Hindus have begun speaking out in support of Christians. "Intelligent people all over the state are now coming out in public saying, 'What we need is a peaceful society, and Christians are never a threat to our society,'" said K.P. Yohannan of the Gospel for Asia mission organization. "That is a new thing. So I think God is working, and I see a lot of people coming to Christ in the days to come in Orissa."

Looking back

10 years ago

"The problem is not Y2K — the problem is the fear of Y2K," says Christian Computing magazine editor Steve Hewitt. "Fear-based Y2K issues could prove to be much worse than any technology-based problem."

20 years ago

Go Forward, a 31-minute video produced by the national Woman's Missionary Union, receives top honors at the Deep South Video Festival sponsored by the International Television Association. The video is based on the life of Annie Armstrong, WMU's first paid director.

50 years ago

Joseph M. Haynes, minister of education, Ridgcrest Church, Jackson, will become associate in the State Sunday School Department beginning Feb. 1, according to Chester L. Quarles, executive secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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By Charles Marx, 1932-2004
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XJU BRNMN XJNARIZJO
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CFXC XIR AEDGR JRRU
JDC X LEHNZVZXJ; WMC
CERH CEXC XIR NZVF.

GMFR KZSR: CEZICH-DJR

Clue: Z=I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Eight: John Eight: Twenty Four

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NATIONAL SLEEPY HEAD DAY

Just in case you missed it, Sunday, July 27, 2008, was the 200th Anniversary of National Sleepy Head Day. I might have warned you before it happened but frankly, I did not know about National Sleepy Head Day. It seems as though the town of Naantali, Finland, has been celebrating this day for two centuries. It involves that one special day and the folks in the city finding the person who sleeps the latest on that day, taking him or her out to the ocean, and throwing them into the water. The coastland of Finland is not like one of the Florida coasts. The Atlantic is chilly, and the experience has to be an eye-opening and maybe even an eye-popping wakeup call for someone in Finland.

Since many of us may have missed the big celebration of National Sleepy Head Day, it might be a good idea for us, especially as Christians, to set our own day and wake up. The Apostle Paul wrote in the book of Romans, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light (Rom. 13:11-12)." What a word to the church. Wake up! Shake off the garment of lethargy, of unconcern, and of spiritual sleepiness. In a world where it seems that every 30 minutes a news cycle places a new crisis at the head of the list, the people of God seem to wake up, blink their eyes, yawn, and go back to sleep. We appear to be disciples of Jesus, but like His first disciples, who as He was praying in the shadow of the cross at the most critical time of His life and ministry could not keep their eyes open, neither can we. What can we do? Is it possible for us to wake up before it is too late? Here are some possibilities of what we might be able to do.

Shake yourself, don't fake yourself. What do I mean? Have you ever been driving late into the night or into the wee hours of the morning and you become so tired that the road becomes a long black ribbon in front of you? You begin to think that if you could just close your eyes for a second or two you would be all right. The tragedy is that many a life has been lost because the second became multiple moments and the person was overcome with sleep and then crashed. Sometimes folks just stop their car on the side of the road, get out, walk around, shake their heads and try to get the cobwebs clear, and get back in and go again. It helps to shake yourself.

I am fully aware of the fact that God can shake us and get our attention, but I also know that we can still have enough

sensitivity about us and enough sensitivity about us that we will want to wake up and be available to be used by God. Don't fake yourself into thinking that just a few more minutes, hours, days, or weeks of spiritual unconcern will be okay. Like the driver in the night, you may fake yourself into disaster.

Another good thing that we could do is not to relax but to refocus. We live in a culture that the main goal of its existence is to have fun and enjoy life. Do not let anything keep you from just having your personal joy need met. Do not think for a minute that this is something that only affects the very young who want to reach out for a toy or do not want to wait 45 seconds on their next bottle. It plagues all of us. We want our way. We want what we want, when we want it. We want to live in a relaxed state of mind and heart. That may have its place, but when there are critical needs around your life it is time to refocus.

For years, I have seen one event after another, one family crisis after another, one major life-altering event after another, come into peoples' lives. Maybe it is the illness of a child or a serious injury to a father. Maybe a debilitating disease has gripped a grandparent. For days if not weeks everything else in life becomes secondary or totally insignificant. The priority, the great need that has touched the family, is what gets all of the attention. Everyone becomes refocused. Those who are in the immediate circle of need and are impacted the greatest may go not hours but days without sleep. It seems as though their concern drives every part of life's engine and they can stay up, stand up, and care relentlessly. Others look at them and wonder how they do it. It happens because they have refocused. Something and someone who needs them becomes so important that everything else seems unimportant. You have seen that happen or maybe you have experienced it.

What if the people of God became so concerned about His work, His Kingdom, and the efforts to reach a lost world that the need to magnify the presence of Jesus in our world was front and center? We would refocus rather than just relax. To refocus would mean that we would come to church not just with the main concern on the front edge of our heart being, "What's in it for me," and, "Do I like what

is taking place," but "What does God want?" and, "How can we increase our efforts to do what He wants?"

Finally, it would make a world of difference for all of us sleepy heads if we would look to the light and not just wander in the night. Jesus is the Light of the World. To everyone who looks to Him there is hope, direction, a new understanding, and a life of purpose. The light can wake you up! Years ago when they were test firing the rocket engines that would take our astronauts into space, I had the unique privilege of going

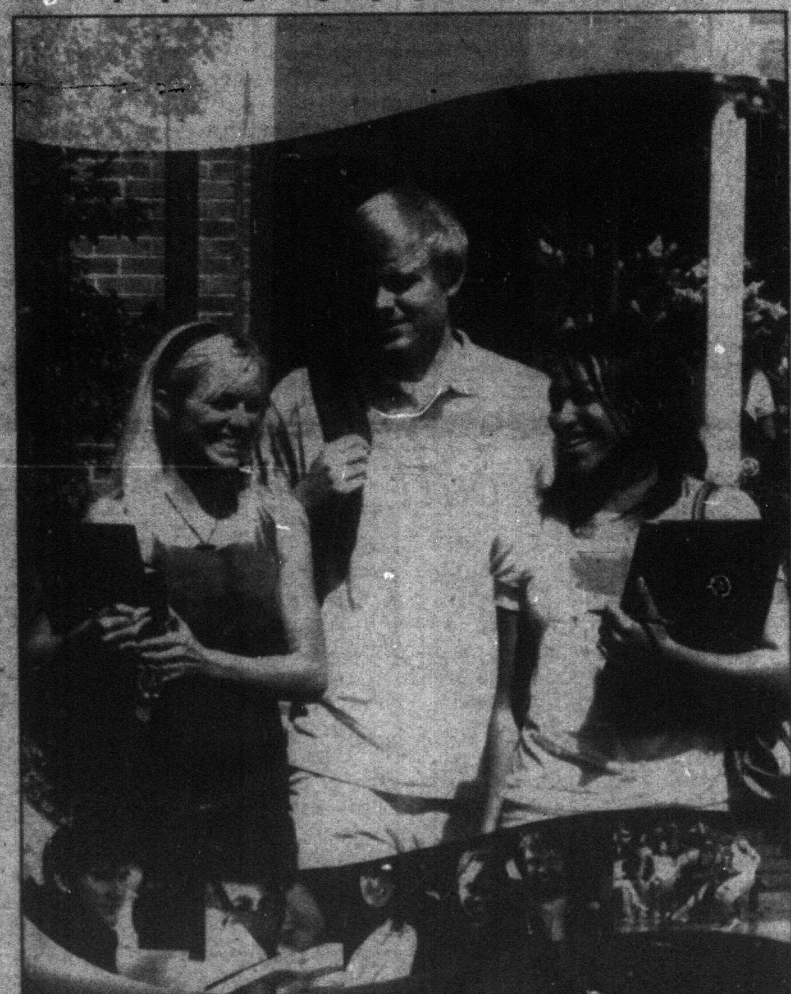
to see one of the tests. I had heard about how they would light up the sky and shake the ground, but I had not seen one. Then I was invited to attend what was the first successful test firing of the three engines that would be on our space shuttles. I went there in the darkness of the night. When I reached the viewing area, I looked out across the land where the test was to take place and it was mostly in the dark. As the countdown took place for the test firing, the sun had not risen and darkness was still prevalent. The light flashed and erupted from the pilot of those engines, and it looked like the whole side of the earth had caught fire. It was still predawn, but I was not sleepy. The light woke me up. Could it be that Jesus wants to walk among us and wake us up?

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Directions

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Practical Principles for Christian Living



Praying in 2009

By Rob Chambers
Miss. Baptist Christian Action Commission

If you've ever seen or picked beans or watermelons in the garden, then you've likely noticed their growth habit. They have runners going in all directions. It's not hard to miss the fruit, but identifying the true vine is pretty tough. One thing's for sure though. If you tear one of these vines from its source — the true vine, then you'll notice that the vine will eventually wilt.

It may take several hours to a day for the vine to show that it's been severed from its life source, but it doesn't take long at all on a hot, southern, summer day.

In comparison, our life with Christ is not all that different. If we're connected to Christ we thrive, but disconnected we wither away.

Christians remain connected to Christ through prayer that seeks to align them with God and His purposes, not the other way around. Jesus' model prayer in Matthew 6 demon-



Chambers

strates this, as He submitted Himself to the will of God, not His own.

If we are connected to God and being filled with the Spirit, then when we are hard pressed the fruit of the Spirit comes forth. On the other hand, if a Christian is not abiding in Christ through prayer and when the intensity of a trial or temptation comes, as does the burning, noonday sun on a summer day, then he too will wither and die.

King Josiah (2 Kings 22-23) came to this realization — that he had been disconnected from God and His ways. King Josiah knew he was subject to God's wrath lest he pray and humble himself before God. The historical account of King Josiah demonstrates that prayer resulted not only in his life being spared, but also delayed the judgment of Judah till after his death.

God is looking for believers to be humble and to be prayerfully seeking

Him. Many Christians today are so busy that they reach the end of the day without truly seeking God. If this is characteristic of Christians across our state and nation, then the result is a disconnected and withering Church. Such a Church cannot lead our state and nation toward the fruit of revival where lives are radically transformed by God.

Social and moral change in our state and country truly begins when Christians adopt an attitude of humility, prayer, and repentance before God. It is then the lost will see the Church as the Salt and Light (Matt. 5:13-16) — as something savory that offers them a hopeful alternative to their current way of life that is displeasing to the Lord.

The Christian Action Commission urges Christians toward a two-fold task of being prayerful and being a people who seek to reason, as Paul did in Acts 17:22-31, with others who do not embrace biblical truth.

With the opening of the 2009 MS Legislative Session we've seen several

House and Senate bills that need your attention. Some need affirmation and others need to die on the vine.

To review a list of bills being monitored by the Christian Action Commission and to send your state legislator a message, visit us on the web at www.christianaction.com and select MS Legislation to Watch in 2009 under Legislation and Politics.

Also, on February 6 & 7 the Christian Action Commission will co-sponsor the Restoration Grace conference at Morrison Heights Baptist Church in Clinton, Miss. This conference is designed to encourage and equip the Church to respond in a Christ-like manner to those whose lives have been impacted by homosexuality. For more information on this conference, you may call Judy at 601-925-6427 or visit www.morrisonheights.org/restorationgrace.

Rob Chambers is a consultant for the Christian Action Commission. He can be contacted at 601-292-3331 or email at rchambers@christianaction.com

CLASSIFIED ADS

THE ARKANSAS BAPTIST HOME FOR Children is seeking houseparents. Salary, medical, insurance, housing, and other benefits. Contact Randy Luper, campus director, 870.723.5344 or email rluper@abchomes.org. Visit www.abchomes.org. ABCHomes is an agency of the AR Baptist State Convention. ABCHomes is compliant with Section 504 of the Rehab Act of 1973.

DOLLYWOOD'S "KINGDOM HEIRS" scheduled to make a special Mississippi appearance on Friday, January 30, 2009 @ 7:30pm at 38th Avenue Baptist church in Hattiesburg, MS. Reserve your tickets @ 601-466-4343

DISCOUNT BAPTISTRIES & STEEPLES. Baptist murals, heaters, lighting, seating, wall crosses, pew cushions, krinkglas, carpet, signs, Church Supply Company of Texas, 800-728-8291.

NORRIS BOOKBINDING COMPANY, Inc., old Bibles rebound. Also, church bulletins and hymnals. For more information call 662-453-7424 or fax us at 662-455-6743.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF Sevierville, Tennessee is seeking to fill the position of Executive Associate Pastor.

Send resumes to Executive Associate Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 317 Parkway, Sevierville, TN 37862. A ministry description for this position can be requested by visiting our web site at fbcssev.org

FBC, CHATSWORTH GEORGIA, is seeking a full-time Minister of Music. Chatsworth is located in northwest Georgia and has an average worship attendance of 325. We have a blended service and a graded choir program. You may send your resume to Tommy Snyder, P.O. Box 1267, Chatsworth, Georgia 30705, fbccpastor@windstream.net.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY SPEAKER: searching for a speaker for your next women's ministry event? Corrie Clay, founder of Filling the Gap Ministries, is ready to bring a fresh perspective from God's word to your ladies. To schedule Corrie, call 205-240-8872, or visit www.fillingthegapministries.com.

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LAKEWOOD MEMORIAL - 4 ADJA- CENT cemetery lots valued at \$7160, asking \$3500. Call 801-937-0152.

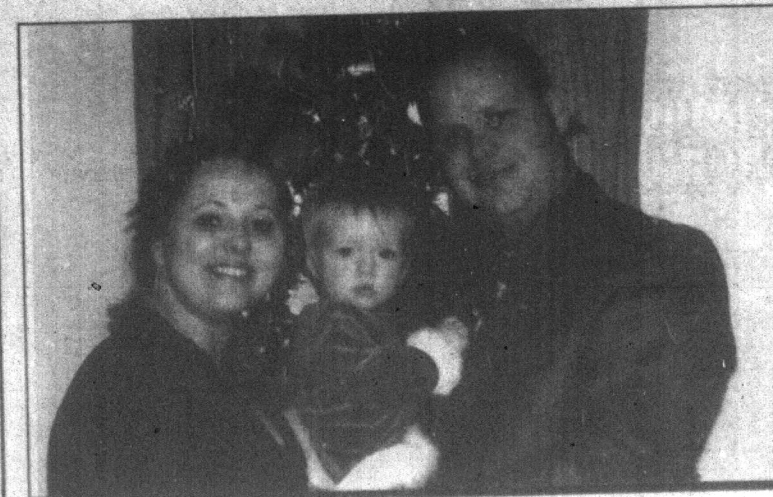
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TRUSSVILLE, AL is seeking a full time Preschool Minister to lead our preschool families - children birth through kindergarten. Previous experience required. E-mail resumes to lundia@fbctrussville.org

STAFF CHANGES

1. **Emmanuel Church, Newton Association,** has called Jamie Leach as pastor. Shown are Leach, wife Kristy, and daughter Jascie.
2. **Hugh A. Martin, pastor of Laurel Hill Church, Philadelphia,** has retired, and is available for pulpit supply, revivals, conferences, and interim pastorates. He can be contacted at (601) 656-9713, via e-mail at hughmart3@bellsouth.net, or at 103 Condo St., Philadelphia, MS 39350.
3. **Matt Hess** has been called to serve **Carey Chapel Church, Red Banks,** as pastor. He is a US Marine Corps veteran and is a graduate of Luther Rice University and will complete his M. Div. degree with Mid-America Seminary in May 2010. He is shown with his wife Arrica and two boys, Isaac and Cayn.



1. The Leaches



3. The Hesses

MS POSITIONS

FULL-TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANT needed: Hillcrest Baptist Church, 5950 Terry Road, Byram, MS 39272, 601-372-0132. Send resume to jamie@hillcrestbyram.org. www.hillcrestbyram.org.

NURSERY WORKER NEEDED: "BED-BABY" room, during all services and events. Hillcrest Baptist Church, 5950 Terry Road, Byram, MS 39272, www.hillcrestbyram.org. Mail resume to, or contact jamie@hillcrestbyram.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. The Weavers



2. New Hope Church, Sumrall



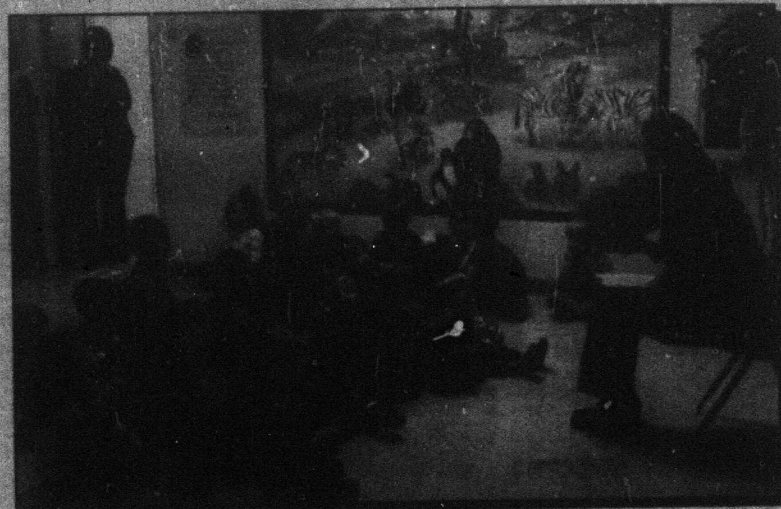
3. Branch Church, Morton



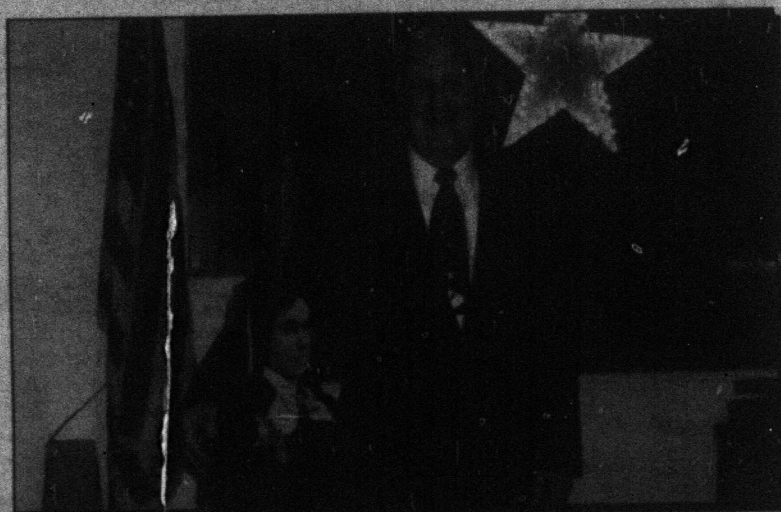
4. Raybourn ordination



1. Cash Church, Scott County, honored Clarence and Claudia Weaver for serving 46 years as church treasurer/clerk.
2. New Hope Church, Sumrall, held its baby dedication Dec. 7 with seven new participants. Shown are the families.
3. The RAs and GAs of Branch Church, Morton, are shown with festival masks they made during their IMB study on Venezuela.
4. Improve Church, Columbia, recently ordained Marty Raybourn as deacon. Shown are pastor Darel Daniels, Raybourn, and wife Terri.
5. As a kickoff to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the Mission Friends at Petal-Harvey Church, Petal, participated in Passport to China, where the children learned about Lottie Moon, played games, ate food, and made crafts all focused around China. Shown are the participants.
6. Pine Grove Church, Dumas, worshiped with Lottie Moon during the four Sundays in December. From an off-stage microphone, she shared about her 40 years in China and challenged members to give liberally. The church exceeded her goal by more than \$700. Shown are "Miss Moon" and pastor Bill Foley.
7. The children's choir of First Church, Eupora, presented the Christmas story with drama and song Dec. 21. Shown are the participants.
8. Mission Hill Church, Wesson, held a baby dedication Nov. 9 for Zoe Clayre Carnley, daughter of Donovan and Niki Carnley.
9. First Church, Vicksburg, is offering a seminar, A Call to Discernment, led by Justin Peters, Feb. 1 - 4. Sun., 10:50 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 6:30 p.m.
10. Teraple Church, Hattiesburg, West Campus, is hosting Fusion Jan. 23, a family event where kids take their parents to church. Doors open 6:30 p.m. with event begin-



5. Petal-Harvey Church



6. Pine Grove Church, Dumas



7. First Church, Eupora

ning at 7. Bags of groceries will be given away to families in need. For information, call (601) 450-3069.

11. Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, is offering the Restoration Grace Conference on homosexuality Feb. 6 - 7. Friday will focus on training the church and counselors; Saturday offers sessions for overcomers, spouses, parents, family members, and youth. Registration and information is at www.morrisonheights.org/restorationgrace or by calling (601) 925-6427.



8. Zoe Clayre Carnley

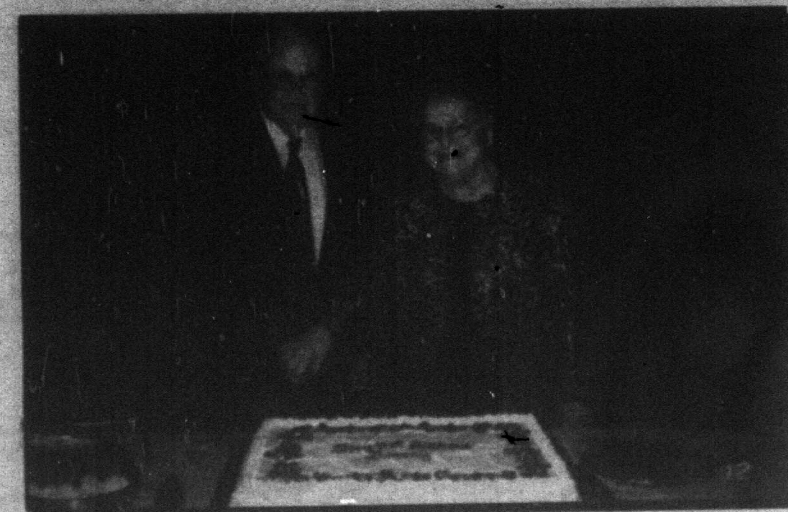
JUST FOR THE RECORD



12. Mantee Church youth



13. New Montpelier Church



14. The Martins



15. Jones ordination

12. Twenty-six adults and students from Mantee Church, Mantee, attended Xtreme Winter youth conference in Gatlinburg, Tenn., Dec. 31 - Jan. 2. Shown are the participants.

13. The children and youth ministry of New Montpelier Church, Woodland, presented their Christmas program Family Night at Christmas Dec. 14. Shown are the children, youth, and workers who participated.

14. Cato Church, Cato, recognized Ralph and Rennette Martin for many years of service to the church. Shown are the Martins.

15. Hickory Grove Church, Sumrall, recently ordained Marshall Glenn Jones to the gospel ministry. He had been serving as interim at Union Church near Hot Coffee. He is available for supply, interim, etc., and can be contacted at (601) 758-3740 or 946 Old Salt Road, Sumrall, MS 39482. Shown are Julissa Jones, Jones, and pastor Kenneth E. Walters.

16. Pleasant Hill Church, Tippah County, held a dedication service for their new family life building Nov. 23. Shown, front from left, are Colleen Jackson, J.W. Kellum, and Ruby Crum; back, Billy Skinner, Larry Wilbanks, Ray Owen, and pastor Lyndell Davis.

17. Bunker Hill Church, Columbia, licensed Matt Robinson to full-time ministry. Shown are pastor Randy Gardner, Robinson, and Sarah Robinson.

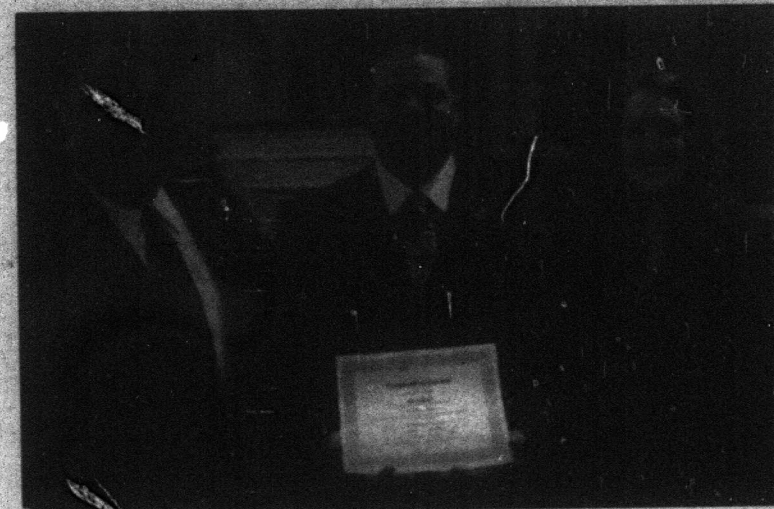
18. The children of Crystal Springs Church, Tylertown, performed the Christmas program From Our Herd to Your Herd Dec. 14. Shown are the children.

19. The BSU of Pearl River Community College assisted the North Delta Association in helping 162 families choose toys for 383 children. This is the fifth year the BSU, with director Stan Davis, has helped the association. Shown are the participants.

20. Moak's Creek Church, Bogue Chitto, will host Dogwood Cross in concert Jan. 25, 5 p.m., followed by soup and cornbread supper. For information call (601) 276-9227.



16. Pleasant Hill Church



17. Gardner and the Robinsons

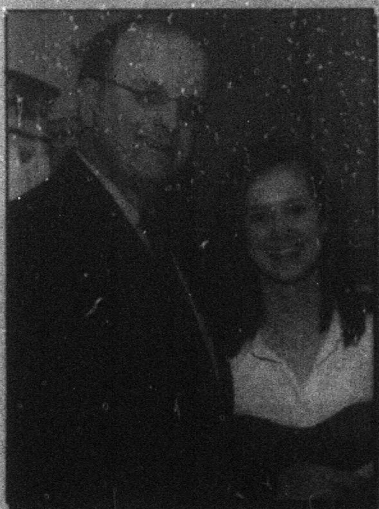


18. Crystal Springs Church



19. BSU at North Delta Association

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Ladd and Buckles



2. Holifield and Hicks



3. Douglas and Hawthorne



4. Simpson and Monaghan



5. Gabucci ordination

1. Taylor Ladd, First Church, Vicksburg, made a public commitment to Christian service through missions Dec. 14. Shown are Ladd and pastor Matt Buckles.

2. The Bible drill ministry of Tuckers Crossing Church, Laurel, was recognized by Don Hicks, of the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Dec. 28. The Bible drill ministry at the church dates back to 1980 with over 100 participants and seven of those being recognized as nine-year participants. Shown are leader Carolyn Holifield and Hicks.

3. Bobby Douglas was recently recognized for 50 years of ministry service, having served churches in Mississippi, Arizona, and Tennessee. He is currently associational missions director for Mid-Delta Association. Shown are Douglas and Daniel Hawthorne, First Church, Bruce.

4. First Church, Amory, recently licensed Bill Monaghan to the ministry. Shown are pastor Allen Simpson and Monaghan. Monaghan is available for revivals, preaching, music and senior programs.

5. Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale, ordained Chris Gabucci as deacon Jan. 11. Shown are pastor James Edward Lawrence, Jr., Michelle Gabucci, and Gabucci.

6. Meadowview Church, Starkville, presented The Christmas County Spelling Bee with a live nativity scene, with 37 participating.

7. Liberty Church, Flowood, will host a missions conference featuring NAMB missionaries from Alaska Jan. 25 - 28; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Tues., 7 p.m.; Wed., 6:30 p.m. Brenda Crim, David George, and John Forester, speakers.

8. The Master's Hands, the puppet ministry of Tangipahoa Church, Summit, is performing Jan. 25, 6:45 p.m.; Tangipahoa Church; Feb. 7, First Church, Magnolia, 7 p.m.; Bogue Chitto Church, McComb, Feb. 21; Thompson Church, Smithdale, Mar. 8, 5:30 p.m.; and Pleasant Valley Church, Meadville, Mar. 21, 7 p.m. For information, call (601) 341-1312 or 341-1314.



6. Meadowview Church, Starkville

9. Mt. Zion Church, Osyka, turned 170th years old July 28, 2008. The church celebrated this anniversary the 4th Sunday in July, 2008.

10. Leaf River Church, Smith County pastor Danny Dickerson has written a book called Very Early in the Morning, published by Tate Publishing. It is available at Barnes & Noble, Walden's, and Books-a-Million.

11. First Church, Bay St. Louis, will hold worship services in their sanctuary Feb. 15, 10:30 a.m. for the first time since Katrina. The church will also have a celebration service and ribbon cutting at 10:15 a.m. March 15.

12. Leaf River Church, Smith County, will host the gospel group Heirline Feb. 1, 11 a.m., followed by lunch.

13. Rehobeth Church, Rankin County, will sponsor a gospel music concert at the Livingston Performing Arts Center at Roosevelt State Park, Morton, Jan. 31, 6:30 p.m. Tickets, \$20 at door. Entertainers include the Blackwoods, Tal Vardaman, Shelly Overby, Shanna Harrell, Kathy Walters, and Tammy Brun. For information, call (601) 854-8953.

14. Forest Church, Forest, is hosting a simulcast marriage conference, Feb. 28, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., featuring Beth Moore, Gary Smalley, John Trent, Gary Thomas, Dale Tackett, and Jeremy Camp. Tickets, \$40 individual, \$69.00 couple. For information, call (601) 469-2206.

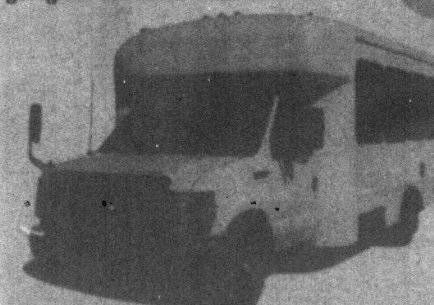
15. First Church, Morton, is hosting a children's ministry day Feb. 14, 9 a.m. - noon. The event gives children an opportunity to minister to people with health-care needs through a variety of hands-on service projects. For information, call (601) 854-6744, and RSVP no later than Jan. 28.

16. Tate Church, Corinth, is hosting Selah in the Flatland with professional freestyle skateboarder Tim Byrne and concert with Common Thread Jan. 23, 6 - 8 p.m. Free.

17. Morgan City Church, Morgan City, has 24 choir robes to give away. For information, call (662) 254-7701.

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Offering envelopes sending fresh message on giving

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Despite the challenging economic times, Christians have had a readiness over the years to "love thy neighbor" despite their own money fears, as evidenced by the growth of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program launched in 1925.

Southern Baptists' channel for supporting national and international missions and ministry accelerated during the Great Depression — "a time when it should have disappeared," said Ben Stroup, coordinator of LifeWay Christian Stores' offering envelope service. "Instead, it brought churches together."

Younger Southern Baptists are less informed about the impact of the Cooperative Program than previous generations who faithfully supported the effort, Stroup added.

John Kyle, director of Cooperative Program develop-

ment for the SBC Executive Committee, added, "Many church members, or maybe even most church members, have no idea what the Cooperative Program is, and more importantly, who it reaches."

At the 2007 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio, the Executive Committee launched a campaign — Every Number Has a Story — to raise awareness about the Cooperative Program by using statistics to communicate the breadth and reach of ministry supported by Southern Baptists. For example:

- 609,968 — The number of baptisms in 2007 reported by International Mission Board missionaries and their overseas co-workers.

- 2,778 — The number of endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains who last year led 9,954 people to Christ.

- 3.5 million — The number of meals fed to the hungry

in 2007, through Southern Baptist hunger ministries in North America.

- 1,238 — The number of homes and buildings repaired in 2007 by disaster relief volunteers.

LifeWay's offering envelope service has created an Every Number Has a Story envelope series to support the Executive Committee's efforts. Each offering envelope carries a different number and picture that reinforces the impact of the Cooperative Program in addition to the church's custom information. The envelopes can be distributed individually in bulletins and pews, in boxed sets or sent directly to homes of church members through a mailing program.

"It is our hope that the envelopes will begin to reseed the vision and highlight the fruit of our cooperative missions and ministries in the hearts of Southern Baptists across the country," Kyle said.

"Giving is an outward sign of an inward commitment," Stroup said. "People want to

contribute to something larger than themselves and there is no better denominational effort" than the Cooperative Program.

"Further," Stroup said, "young adults today are two generations removed from the people who launched the Cooperative Program. No one is telling them the CP story. If more people understood the Kingdom impact of the Cooperative Program, they would see it as the most effective long-term, sustainable strategy to accomplish the Great Commission."

Stroup hopes the offering envelope series also will relieve pastors of the pressure

of building support for the program through one special-emphasis Sunday a year.

"This is our pew strategy," Stroup said. "The Every Number Has a Story series is really a grassroots effort to keep the ministry — and the fruit — of the Cooperative Program consistently in front of church members throughout the year and to educate younger Southern Baptists on the Kingdom impact they have around the world as their church participates in this effort."

The Every Number Has a Story offering envelope series can be ordered at www.lifeway-stores.com/envelopes or by calling (800) 874-6319.

COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS

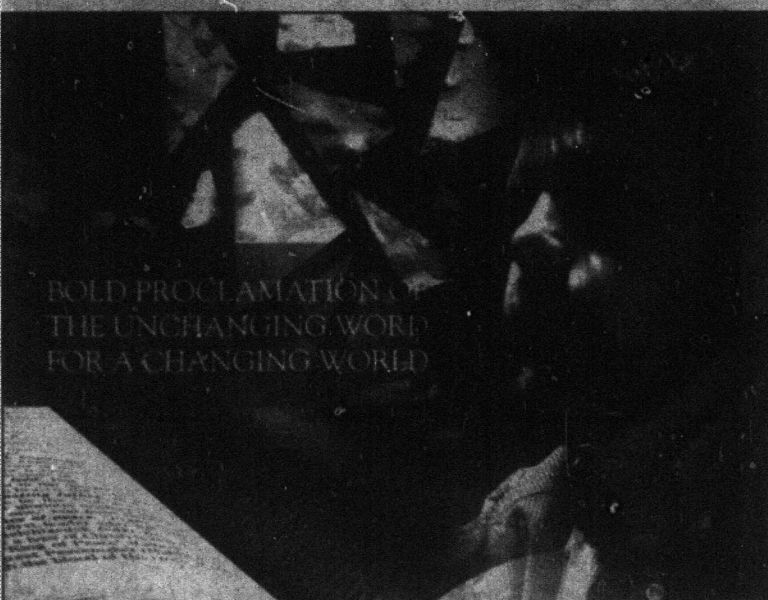
1. Recruiters from more than 50 companies will visit Mississippi College to meet MC students as part of Career Day 2009. Facing a tough job market nationwide, hundreds of MC students are expected for the annual event, set for Tuesday Feb. 24. The Career Day runs from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. in Anderson Hall at the B.C. Rogers Student Center on the Clinton campus. For details, visit www.mc.edu/career or call (601) 925-7717.

2. Mississippi College students will sing, dance and face interviews the evening of Jan. 22 as they compete for the \$2,000 top prize in the annual Miss MC Scholarship Pageant. Eight contestants — seven from Mississippi and one from Texas — are each hoping to impress the judges Thursday night at Swor Auditorium and succeed 2008 Miss MC Morgan Byrd. A nursing student from Flowood and 2007 Northwest Rankin High graduate, Byrd will crown the 2009 winner to cap the two-hour production. The event begins at 7 p.m. and is open to the public.

3. Burn Page has come to Mississippi College as Christian studies professor. Page also serves as director of the Institute of Christian Leadership at MC. He comes to MC after 14 years as pastor at First Church in Baton Rouge following five years as pastor at Madden Church in Madden. He first pastored Mt. Zion Church at Osyka after graduation from seminary in 1983.

4. A research professor of the New Testament from Dallas Theological Seminary and best-selling author of *Breaking the DaVinci Code*, Daryl Bock will be a guest speaker at Mississippi College Feb. 2-3. Bock will deliver the 2009 Evangelism Lecture as part of a series of talks sponsored by the MC Institute of Christian Leadership on the Clinton campus. He also serves as professor of spiritual development and culture at the seminary in Texas. For more information, contact Lynda Street at the School of Christian Studies and the Arts at (601) 925-3218.

5. The Winters School of Music at William Carey University will kick off the Second Annual Clarence Dickinson Organ Festival with a concert by Matthew Lewis Jan. 23 at 7:30 p.m. on the Hattiesburg campus. Lewis, a career organist, choral conductor and educator will also serve as guest artist and master class clinician for the festival.



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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to buy tokens to others through this program. The program is a beautiful way to show love and appreciation for those who are and have been special to you.

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Ms. Marilyn Laird & Family
M. J. Davis
Mrs. Billie Lynn Arthur
Betty Dobbs
Mr. and Mrs. Joe H. Barber Jr.
Dr. Carter Dobbs
Mr. Carson Hughes
Dr. & Mrs. Jep S. Brock
Ralph, Cheryl Leigh & Mary Lyn Perkins
Mr. & Mrs. Will Dodds
Mr. & Mrs. Johnnie A. Hudson
Celeste Faulkner
Mr. Reed Givens
Mel "Keith" Faulkner
Mr. Reed Givens
Helen Fesmire
Mr. & Mrs. James Anthony DeLee
Adam Ford
Carlos, Phyllis, Justin & Ashley Knight
Ray & Bea Fore
Toby & Sherry Frierson
E. L. Fortenberry
Welcome Neighbor Club
Mary I. Gaine
Mr. & Mrs. Roy D. Hendricks
Bobby Gamml
Ms. Kathie D. Gamml
Geneva Gardner
Mr. Bobby C. Gardner
Frank Garvey
Mr. Reed Givens
Clay Gilliam
Mrs. Clayann Gilliam
Pametta

Johnny Hall, IV
Mr. & Mrs. James Anthony DeLee
Bill Hallman
Larry, Tracie & Laura Rushing
O. L. (Hamp) Hampton
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse R. Johnson
Birdie Hanna
Ms. Jill B. Riddell
Mrs. Hazel Margaret Young Harrington
Penrose C. St. Amant
Mrs. Joyce Hart
Mr. R. B. Wallace
Jennifer Hartsog
Don & Suzanne Honea
Mrs. Iris Hawkins
Gene Dobbs
Rita Goldman
Janice Kinard
Horace W. Hendricks
Mr. & Mrs. Roy D. Hendricks
Mrs. Kathleen Henry
Dr. & Mrs. Fred H. Tyner Jr.
Mr. Ervin Holland
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Coleman
Dr. Wendell Holmes
Ms. Frances M. Smith
Maurice Lee Honea
Suzanne Honea
F. K. Horton, Jr.
Ms. Lucile Horton & Family
Clarence Hutchins
Jeff & Karen Peterman
Mrs. Lois Johnson
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Ligon Jr.
Mary Ellen Johnson
Joe B Hartley SSC-FBC
Batesville
Raymond "Dick" L. Kitchens
Mr. & Mrs. Randy B. Eaves
Rebecca Edwards Lancaster
Mr. Lon Stallings
James Fred Lang
Ms. Polly M. Frazier
Meredith Bryanne Lee
Billy & Shirley Hastings
Coleman "Red" Lester
Ms. Jill B. Riddell
Mr. Robert Lightsey
Hope SS, Adult 6, FBC-Louisville
Floyd Lowery
Mrs. Jean S. Moss Family
Darrell Maddox
Dr. & Mrs. Harold Ward
Mrs. Kathryn Magee
Mr. R. B. Wallace
Mrs. Onetta Malone
Mr. & Mrs. Lendon E. Brown
Mr. E. L. McCoy
Mrs. Mary C. Garrett
Buren, Loren & Bobby Mcurtney
Ms. Reba Ann Bonds
John Miller
Mr. & Mrs. William Rex Patterson
Rev. Bill & Betty Mitchell
Wallace & JoAnn Johnston
Jerry, Dorothy & Baby Mitchell
Ms. Jill B. Riddell
Mrs. Kathryn Bass Moody
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse M. Guess
Mr. & Mrs. Donald M. Rawls
Dr. Bill Moore
Beacon SSC, FBC Jackson
Glen Moore
Ms. Marilyn Laird & Family
J. T. Morrison
Mr. & Mrs. Judd A. Morrison
Frank Nored
Mr. Reed Givens
Beverly S. Olds
Capt. Hugh W. Olds Jr.
Glenn Owen
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Coward Jr.
Robert J. Pace
Mike, Sally, Isaac & Joel Hitt
Mother of Mrs. Connie Parkes
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph S. Lyons
L. D. Posey
Bob & Shirley & Family Meeter
Dorothy Powell
Mr. & Mrs. Ronny Mciver
Mrs. Dorothy Powell
Mr. & Mrs. Porter Hull
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy McMillin
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Rawls
Mrs. Betty Jo Valentine
David Rawls Valentine
Rev. Guy Reedy
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Hart
Robert Revere
Bill, Stewart & Trent Curtis
Jenny & Iris Riddell
Ms. Jill B. Riddell
Alice Robinson
Ms. Marilyn Laird & Family
Mrs. Larry (Mildred) Roden
Mrs. Joy B. Roberts
R. F. Rowsey
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Logan
Dwight Wayne Rush
Eunice SSC, Yale St BC, Cleveland
Mr. J. V. Sanford
Mr. & Mrs. Calvin E. Harvey
Carlos, Phyllis, Justin & Ashley Knight

Gundy Sappington
Mrs. Evelyn Sappington
Mr. H. J. Sander
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph S. Lyons
Ms. Saxon
Carlos, Phyllis, Justin & Ashley Knight
Terry McKay Seale
Mr. Reed Givens
Nancy Self
Carol & Bill Miller
George Prentiss Seassums, Sr.
Mrs. Vivian S. Cooper
Rev. Joseph L. Small
Mrs. John N. Miller, Jr.
Ms. Ophie Smith
Carlos, Phyllis, Justin & Ashley Knight
Melvin & Mary Nell Starrett
Mr. & Mrs. John S. Allred

Mrs. Rheta T. Stephenson
Deer Creek BC-Rolling Fork
Mrs. Rosa M. Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Stephenson Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph S. Lyons
John William & Annie Louise Tarver
Tarver Foundation
Dianne Taylor
Jimmy & JoAnn Carruth
Mrs. Mavis Burks Tollos
Mrs. Loville Fleming
The Rick McCarty Family
Mr. Murphy Vaughn
Carlos, Phyllis, Justin & Ashley Knight
David E. Wall
Kenneth & Hope Hawkins

Mr. Lester "Bub" Wallace
Mrs. Jack Fletcher
Mrs. Mildred Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph S. Lyons
W. T. Williams
Mrs. Ruby I. Blackwell
Marjorie Wilson
Ms. Jane S. Goodwin
Mrs. Ann Wise
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Huison
Jimmy Wood
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Renae Worley
Emmanuel BC-Walnut Grove
Dorina Rawls Young
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas M. Simmons



Members of FBC Anguilla hosted a Christmas banquet for The Baptist Children's Village. The church members provided all decorations for the event and cooked and served a wonderful meal for the residents and staff. They also invited a Christian band from Rolling Fork to lead in worship. The group closed the evening by reading from Luke 2 the account of the birth of Christ.

UTICA BAPTIST CHURCH



The several children and adults from Utica Baptist Church recently toured the India Nunnery Campus and delivered items they collected for the ministry.

HOUSEPARENTS NEEDED

The Baptist Children's Village has an opening for a Christian, mission-minded, husband and wife team without dependent children to serve in the position of relief houseparents.

Houseparents receive an excellent salary with benefits and work a 10 day on 5 day off work schedule. All qualified candidates must be at least 25 years of age, have a high energy level, excellent driving record and no criminal history. They also must have a high school education or GED. A private bedroom and meals are included while on duty.

For more information and to request an application please call
601-664-8085



BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Receive New Life
(Evangelism Lesson)

Acts 16:13-18, 25-34

By Bill Patterson

Years ago, wills often began with the phrase, "Knowing the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death, I hereby..."

Those words, "the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death," hit home for members of First Baptist Church of Richland last week. Savanna was eighteen, full of life, and seemingly healthy. The autopsy showed a blood clot in her lungs ended her life suddenly. Savanna's parents, despite their deep hurt, found great comfort in the fact that she knew the Lord and had led others to know Him.

From Searching to Sharing
(Acts 16:13-15)

The Holy Spirit, by way of a dream or a night vision, led Paul, Luke, Silas, and

Timothy to Macedonia where Paul had not yet witnessed.

Beside the Gangites River they found a group of women gathered for prayer. Among them was Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from Thyatira in the Roman province of Asia Minor. Purple dye came from the shell of a certain mollusk from the waters near Thyatira. Producing the dye was labor intensive as each muscle yielded only a drop or two of dye. Purple was so expensive that only the wealthy could wear clothing dyed with the color.

Lydia was wealthy materially but impoverished spiritually. As Paul shared Jesus, this God-fearing Gentile woman soon realized the Lord was the answer to her searching. Lydia became the first convert in Europe.



Patterson

She was baptized, presumably in the Gangites River. Lydia opened her home to the witnesses. Later she even hosted the new church of Philippi in her home. True believers always find a way to do something for Him.

From Spiritual
Bondage to Spiritual
Freedom (Acts 16:16-18)

As Paul and his friends traveled along, they were met by a slave girl. She had a spirit of divination and began yelling that the witnesses were "servants of the Most High God who are proclaiming the way of salvation." In that pagan culture where Zeus was considered the Most High, her message may have been misinterpreted before Paul had the chance to explain.

Paul cast out the spirit from her. We do not know if the girl later became a Christian, but the act of being delivered from the oppressive spirit showed that Jesus has power over demonic spirits. He can still free those who are

under Satan's control.

From Destructive Fear to
Joyful Faith (Acts 16:25-34)

The owners of the slave girl formed a mob that beat Paul and Silas severely, threw them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet into stocks. That prison was probably a cave built into the side of a sheer rock cliff. Imagine the pain, the discomfort, and the disappointment Paul and Silas felt. But they prayed and sang hymns to God. The first sacred concert in Europe took place at midnight in a Philippian jail. And it brought the house down!

The jailer saw the earthquake had opened the prison doors and unfastened the prisoners' chains from the walls. He decided to commit suicide because Macedonia was subject to the Roman laws that specified a guard would bear the penalty in the place of any prisoner who escaped his custody.

Paul stopped the jailer with his assurance that all the prisoners were still in place. Because he'd heard Paul and Silas singing hymns, he realized God had spared them. He wanted to

know how to receive the salvation they'd been singing about. They led him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Later the jailer's family received the Lord Jesus, too. As evidence of their salvation they washed the wounds of Paul and Silas, fed them, rejoiced with them, and soon were baptized by them.

Knowing the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death, have you given your life to the Lord? If not, why not bow in prayer right now and receive Him? If you do know Him, ask Him with whom you can share Him. Give the Holy Spirit a few moments to place on your heart the names of people in your circle of influence who need the Lord. They might be wealthy like Lydia, middle-class like the Philippian jailer, or poverty-stricken like the slave girl. Everyone needs Him. He will save anyone who comes to Him in faith. Ask the Lord to give you boldness and opportunity to share Him.

Patterson is pastor of First Church, Richland.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Are You Ready?

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

By Joyce C. Rogers

This lesson is about the second coming of Jesus, the day of the Lord. Believers should live so as to be always prepared.

Evil is associated with darkness. Believers are called "the sons of light and sons of the day," the opposite of darkness and night.

The day of the Lord will be a time of glory for the Christian, but a time of judgment for the unbeliever. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. It will be totally unexpected.

Recall What You Know

Paul had already instructed the Thessalonians about the second coming. They expected it to be in their lifetime. Naturally they wanted to know when this great event would happen. Since nearly two thousand years have passed,

Christians today generally have less of a sense of expectancy. However, the day of the Lord is no less sure to come!

Only the Father knows when the day of the Lord will come. He will come when the conditions are right. "This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in the entire world as a testimony to all nations. And then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14 HCSB). Jesus spoke in terms of conditions, not timing. He will judge the nations when this great and terrible day comes.

The destruction referred to in verse 3 does not mean the wicked will be annihilated. Rather, the wicked will be separated from God forever.

The Old Testament has several references to the "day of the Lord." The prophets portrayed this "day" as one of darkness



Rogers

and judgment. New Testament writers point to the judgment of sinners but also Christ's final victory. God's eternal sovereignty over all creation will become obvious. God will display His control of the universe, time, history and all people of all time.

Realize Who You Are

Believers must live in a state of readiness. Many evil things happen under the cover of darkness. Thievery and drunken revelry usually happen at night. The believer is careful about his behavior.

Being sober means self-controlled. Self-control is a good character trait in general, but in verse 6 refers to not getting drunk. The only certain way to stay sober is not to drink at all.

Staying awake means being on guard. The evil one will tempt the Christian to engage in unbecoming behavior. Parents and teachers tell children that if they always behave they don't need to worry about being punished. This is good

advice for us all! Some places and some activities are off limits forbidden. Don't even think about it!

Reveal Who You Are

The believer and the unbeliever are as different as day and night. The believer's behavior is characterized by faith, hope and love. Biblical hope is the confidence that God will do what He has done in the past. Love follows faith. "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. The one who does not love remains in death" (1 John 3:14 HCSB).

Wearing "the armor of faith and love on our chests" and the "helmet of the hope of salvation" are metaphors for protection. We are on guard duty (The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol II). The divine purpose is that we live with God for eternity.

When Jesus comes again our salvation will be completed. First we are saved (regenerated), then we grow and mature (sanctified) and finally we will be "raised up" or "caught up" with Jesus in the air and live

with Him forever (glorified). The believer's life, then, is one of growing in grace and looking forward to Jesus' return and living with Him in our glorified bodies forever. Christ's death on the cross made our salvation possible.

Rally Around One Another

There is nothing like the fellowship we find among other Christians. When my husband was pastor of a church near a military base in Spain, our church friends were like family. When a young sailor died, the members rallied around the young widow and her small children. We stood with her in every way we could. An outsider asked if we were her biological family!

Paul commended the Thessalonians for their love for each other. He stressed this again and encouraged them to continue. They are to strive to build up each other in the faith. We also do well if we follow Paul's advice.

Rogers is a member of Main Street Church, Hattiesburg.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.



Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Annie offering finishes strong despite economic woes

TALLADEGA, AL. (BP) — Despite last year's economic downturn, Southern Baptists still contributed more than \$58 million to the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions in 2008 — 98% of the amount raised in the previous year's campaign.

North American Mission Board (NAMB) President Geoff Hammond announced the unaudited results of the offering Jan. 12 at a meeting of some 100 national and state leaders of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega, Al.

"It's been a tough year," Hammond told the WMU leaders. "We knew we were in a recession and the economists didn't confirm it until September, but it was going on all year. We were raising Annie Armstrong funds in the middle of four-dollar-a-gallon gasoline prices.

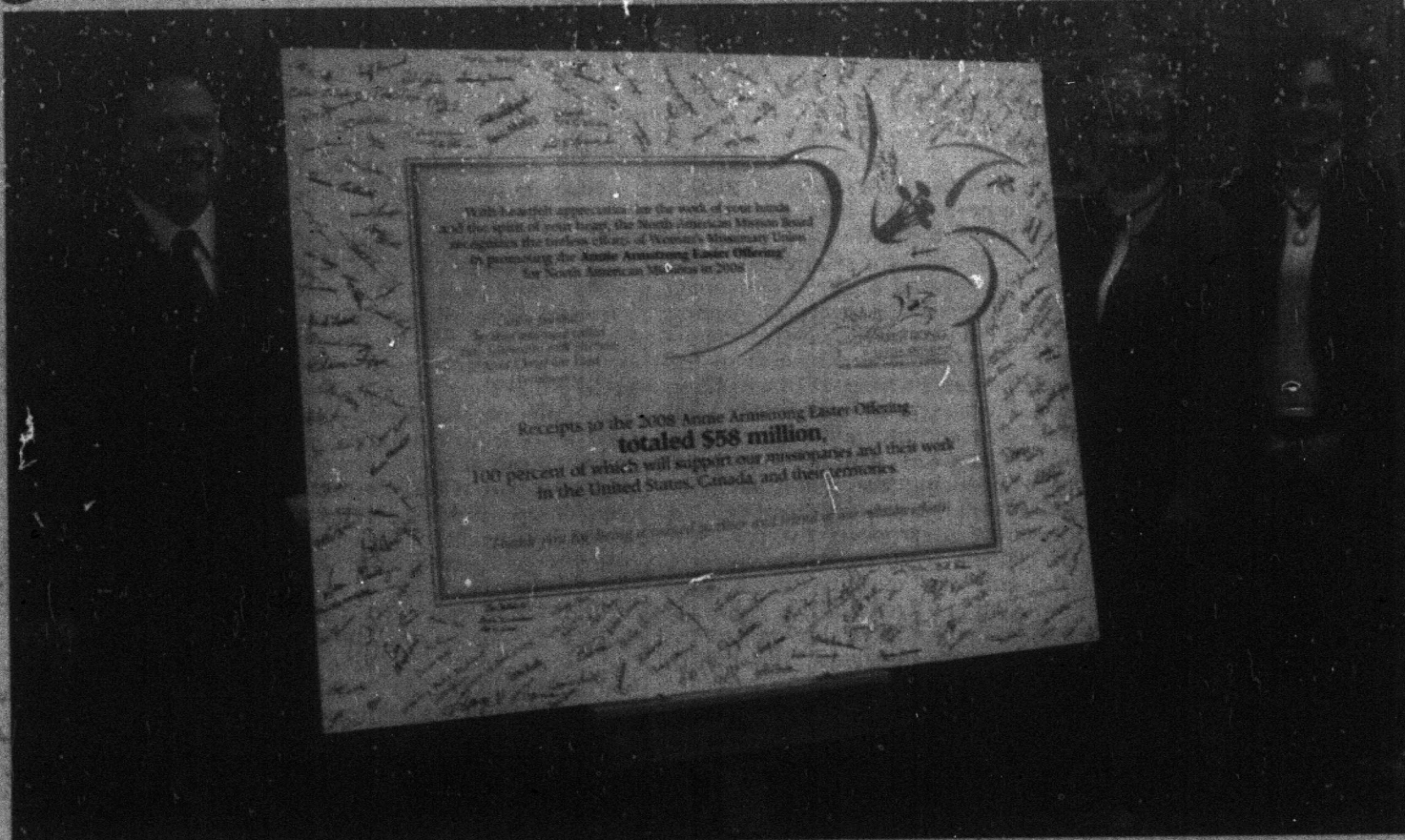
"To raise \$58 million in a recession was a miracle and we praise God for that," Hammond said. "While Annie was down about 2.2% over last year, the fundraising of many charitable organizations was down 10% or more. We praise God for the faithfulness of His people in giving to cooperative missions and to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in 2008. We rejoice at the sustained giving of Southern Baptists."

Presenting a large thank-you board signed by NAMB staff, trustees, and missionaries, Hammond expressed a special thank-you to WMU. "We don't do it on our own and we can't do it without you," Hammond said. "Thank you for what you have done."

Hammond added that in times of recession Southern Baptists have to focus on the most important things. "We're determined that although there is an economic recession, we cannot allow an evangelistic recession," he said.

Wanda Lee, executive director of WMU based in Birmingham, Al., called the Annie Armstrong results "significant because they show what the partnership between WMU and NAMB can do in a difficult year."

"I pray in 2009 all of our cooperative efforts will continue to bring in the resources that our missionaries need to reach the United States and



BIG THANK-YOU — Geoff Hammond (left), president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), presents a sign from NAMB staff, trustees, and missionaries thanking Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) to Wanda Lee (second from right), WMU executive director, and WMU president Kaye Miller (far right). (BP photo by Mickey Noah)

Canada for Christ," Lee said. "We pledge to do our part, although we're having significant changes in our own budgets."

In December, WMU announced it was enacting measures to reduce its 2009 budget by \$1.4 million. Some of those steps included reducing team expense budgets in areas such as travel, projects, and activities; implementing four weeks unpaid furlough for each staff member between January and August 2009; a hiring freeze on vacant positions; reducing employer contributions to retirement plans; freezing merit pay increases; and eliminating incentive bonuses in 2009.

The organization's revised budget for 2009 is \$9.6 million.

Just the previous week, Hammond instructed NAMB's 250 staff members to operate at 90% of their approved budgets during 2009 and said NAMB hiring would be monitored closely this year.

During the WMU conference, Hammond showed a video montage of NAMB's 2009 Week of Prayer missionaries: Gary and Sue Smith in Canada; Al and Noemi Fernandez in Florida; Daniel and Kimberly Goombi in Kansas; Brenda Crim in Alaska; Song Sik and Fanny Kim in California; Lamar and Dolly Duke, formerly of Pennsylvania, now in New York; Paul and Elizabeth Biswas in Massachusetts; and Willie and Jacobs, national NAMB missionaries based in Memphis.

The 2009 goal for the Annie

Armstrong offering is \$65 million. This year's Week of Prayer is March 8. Its theme will be Live with Urgency: Sowing Together for Harvest.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering accounts for 46% of NAMB's budget. The other key channel of funding is Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program by which churches' gifts support state, national, and international missions and ministries.

The national missions offering was established in 1895 by Woman's Missionary Union to support Southern Baptist Convention missionaries in the United States. In 1934, the offering was named in honor of Annie Armstrong, WMU's founder and tireless champion of missions.

Pakistani pastor's daughters kidnapped for sexual slavery

KARACHI, Pakistan (BP) — Two Christian girls, daughters of a Pakistani pastor, have been rescued after more than a month of captivity as sex slaves to Muslim lawyers in Karachi, Pakistan.

According to International Christian Concern (ICC), a human rights organization focused on Christians who are persecuted for their faith, Parvisha Alam, age 18, and her 14-year-old sister Sanam of Gujranwala, Pakistan, were abducted Nov. 12 by a neighbor, Muhammad Irfan, who offered them training in cosmetology and jobs in his beauty salon.

When Irfan arrived to take the girls to his shop, he and an accomplice, Muhammed Mehboob, reportedly gave the girls drinks that were drugged. When the sisters awakened, they were locked in a hotel room nearly 500 miles away from home. According to ICC, the two men raped the girls at gunpoint, then took them to Karachi where, after

several more days of sexual assault, the girls were forced to convert to Islam.

Promised that if they cooperated they would be released soon, the two girls were taken to meet with two lawyers, identified by ICC as Kokab Sahab-Ul-Din and Nayer Zia-Ul-Din. Irfan reportedly told the lawyers both girls had embraced Islam and wished to enter a government women's shelter. The girls were told the lawyers would present them in court the next day and they would be free to go.

The lawyers then allegedly took the girls to an apartment for the night and gave them a room to sleep in. After the girls had fallen asleep, the lawyers returned and dragged Parvisha Alam into another room and sexually assaulted her, according to the ICC report.

Her sister ran to help her, then saw a cell phone lying on a table, which she used to call police. The police

arrested Sahab-Ul-Din, and Parvisha was taken immediately to a hospital.

The girls' father, Sharif Alam, who is a Christian pastor, traveled to Karachi to bring his daughters home and then contacted CLAAS, a Christian legal group, for help. When the CLAAS team visited the family Dec. 31, a crowd of about 35 people gathered outside the house, demanding the "converted" girls be turned over to local Muslim authorities, according to ICC.

The crowd began throwing bricks and stones at the house and when Alam went out to talk with them a gun was fired. The mob beat Alam's son Sheraz and was trying to break into the house when police arrived. Three people were arrested for the attack.

Since that incident, Alam's son-in-law, Stian Akram Khokhar, has disappeared, according to the family.

"Christians in Pakistan are often targeted not only for their faith but because

they live in poverty and have little means to defend themselves," an ICC spokesman said in a written statement.

The spokesman also requested prayer for the Alams. "Please pray for Parvisha and Sanam and their family. Pray that God would strengthen their faith and heal their wounds. Pray that those responsible for these heinous crimes would be caught and punished appropriately."

About 500,000 young women worldwide are sold into sex slavery each year — 150,000 of them in southern Asia, according to U.S. State Department figures reported by The New York Times.

ICC suggests concerned parties contact Pakistani embassies and request that the government of Pakistan work harder to protect the rights of religious minorities. A call placed by Baptist Press to Pakistan's embassy in Washington, D.C., was not returned by publication deadline Jan. 15.